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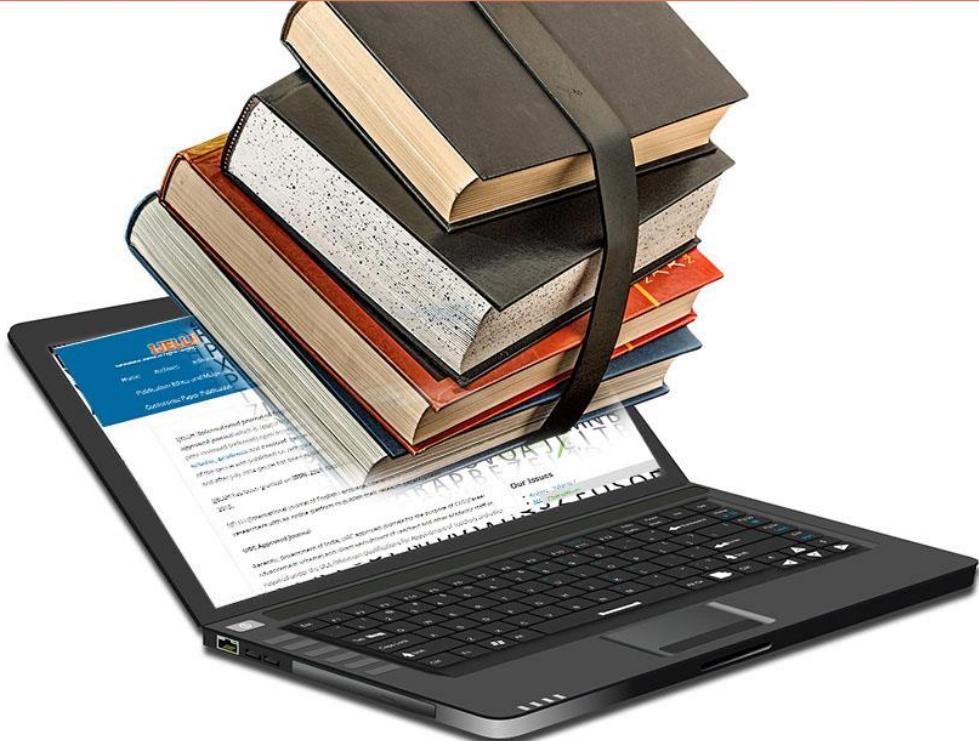
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Analyzing the Writing Tasks of Grade Twelve English Textbook Based On Task-Based Approach Principles

Abstract

The main objective of the study was to evaluate the writing tasks in grade twelve English textbook based on task-based approach principles. The study aimed to analyze the types, the familiarity, goals, integration with other skills, appropriacy for the level of students, strength and the limitations of the writing tasks in the textbook. Descriptive survey design was employed in this study. To gather data of the study, document analysis was used as tool. Data were analyzed quantitatively using percentage and qualitatively through description. The findings indicated that a variety of task-based writing tasks were explicitly provided in grade twelve English textbook which were categorized under controlled, guided and free types of writing tasks. The study also revealed that the writing tasks were provided

in the textbook that encourage learners to perform writing through varies writing activities, clearly stated writing task instruction and writing tasks tried to be integrated with other language skills. Finally, based on the research findings and conclusions, recommendations were made.

Key words: *Task Based Language Teaching Method, Task, Textbook, writing activities*

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

According to White (1989), until the end of 1950s, second language teaching of writing was highly influenced by the audio-lingual approach. During that time, writing skill was regarded as being somewhat inferior form of the other language skills particularly speech. Besides, the focus of teaching writing was mainly on the achievement of linguistic knowledge for the approach was accuracy oriented (White, 1989). However, nowadays, classroom methodology has been heavily influenced by communicative approach, with its emphasis on task-oriented activities that involve, where possible exchange of information and free use of language, without undue concern for mistakes (Littlewood, 1981; Nunan, 1988).

In the principles of communicative tasks, activity of teaching writing is mainly concerned with teaching writing as a means of communication. Thus, learners are expected to acquire formal and acceptable writing skills and to know how to use this skill outside the classroom. Besides, the ability to write logically and grammatically connected sequences of sentences is also given concern (White, 1989). Tasks (activities) have a vital role especially in the more recent version of communicative language teaching, which is Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). As some scholars, like Richards and

Hyland cited in Desalegn (2011) indicate that a well-developed writing task is important for learners both in its academic life and as a means of communication. According to their view, this can be possible if learners learn writing effectively with the help of well-designed writing tasks in their textbook.

The primary goal of language teaching and learning is communication, so the effective designing of communicative tasks has become more and more popular. Communicative task has involved as an important component within curriculum planning, implementation and evaluation since the end of 1960s (Nunan, 1989). In current teaching approaches like TBLT, syllabus content and instructional materials are selected with reference to the communicative tasks. These tasks are tasks that learners will need to engage in outside the classroom.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The main purpose of this study was to evaluate writing tasks in English textbooks used in Ethiopia to determine whether they are appropriate for fulfilling the ultimate goal of language learning/teaching in developing students writing skills. Teaching materials create the learning environment in which the teachers and students act.

Therefore, teaching and learning materials should design tasks and activities to develop students writing skills. When students are able to write, they can be competent communicators. In line with this, Richard and Rogers (2001) add that a well-developed writing skill is important for learners both in its academic role and as a means of communication in a community. According to their view, learners should get well designed writing tasks and activities in their textbook.

Several research results revealed that the textbooks are the most important piece of material in the foreign language classroom and the teaching relies heavily on them. Therefore, by studying the EFL textbooks, information about how writing tasks are designed in English textbook which is used in Ethiopia to tech grade 12 students. Since the textbook is the main teaching learning material, it is important to study what kind of writing skills are designed in student's English textbooks.

In this regard, the researcher has found some studies conducted in three different skills other than writing skill. Tewodros Meseret (2014) analyzing the writing tasks of grade nine English textbook based on task-based approach principles. The other similar study, which was conducted by Abebaw (2012), was on evaluating the listening tasks presented in Grade 12 English Textbook. The result of his study shows that most of the tasks are designed fulfilling most of the relevant criteria of Nunan (1989) checklist. Even if there are a number of studies conducted around the teaching and learning of writing, the researcher of this study could not find any study which links the problem to the design of the writing tasks in grade 12 English textbook.

The researches mentioned above were conducted on the other skills and other grade level of the textbooks. Therefore, since none of the above researchers made their investigation on how writing tasks are designed in the new textbook of grade 12 English, there is a gap which has not been touched yet. As a result, this study was designed to fill this gap by investigating points that are related to the design of writing tasks in the new English for Grade Twelve Textbook of Preparatory Schools in Ethiopia.

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1.3. Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is mentioned in the following section as general and specific research objectives. The details of the objectives are as follow.

1.3.1. General Objective

The main objective of this study is to evaluate the writing tasks in grade 12 students textbook in line with principles of task based language teaching method.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

The study attempts to achieve the following specific objectives:

1. To examine the components and the nature of the writing tasks

2. To explore how the writing tasks are organized

3. To find out the strength and weakness of the writing tasks in the text book

1.4. Research Questions

In order to achieve the above stated objectives, this investigation attempts to focus on the following specific research questions.

➢ Do the components and nature of the writing tasks meet the criteria set for communicative tasks?

➢ How are the writing tasks organized?

➢ What are the strength and weakness of the writing tasks in the textbook?

1.5. Significance of the study

English serves as a medium of instruction in high schools, colleges and universities in Ethiopia. Students' success in learning other subjects is likely to be dependent on their mastery of the language skills of which knowledge of writing is an important one. Therefore, after the accomplishment of this investigation, the overall research is assumed important for

the following concerned bodies such as to textbook writers and syllabus designers, to English language teachers and to future researchers who would like to investigated further by providing a reference point. So, the results of this study can be helpful for teachers to use appropriate teaching techniques to compensate for the deficiencies of the textbook and the materials developers and syllabus and curriculum designers in Ministry of Education and other pedagogical experts to revise the current textbook or adopt a new textbook instead.

1.6. Scope of the study

This study focuses on the evaluation of the writing tasks of English Textbook for Grade 12. The communicative tasks treat all the four skills and tasks in different grade levels. However, the researcher chose only grade-twelve among the different grade levels and writing among the different skills. Therefore, the data collection was also limited to grade 12 students' English textbook, and to students and teachers of grade 12 at Wachemo, Yekatit, Lisana and Fonko Preparatory Schools.

1.7. Limitations of the Study

In conducting this study, the following limitations were faced by the researcher. This study was conducted in four high schools, only due to shortage of time; conclusions obtained from such narrow study area may not be generalized in the context of other high schools. Moreover, the study was delimited only on writing skill which did not address other language skills.

2.   Methodology

Research Design and Methodology

The main objective of this study is evaluating the writing tasks found in grade 12 English textbook; the present study has examined the components of the writing tasks in line with principles of task based language teaching method. The first section discussed on the research design. Secondly, the research setting and approaches to sampling of the participant are stated. Moreover, data collection instruments and data analysis and interpretation procedures are described. Each of the above sections mentioned as follows:

2.1. The Research Design

The main objective of this study was to evaluate the design of the writing tasks of Grade-Twelve English Textbook. In order to achieve this objective, a descriptive case study research design was chosen. According to (Kumar, 2006) case study is an excellent research type for obtaining thick description of a complex issue in its context. Therefore, the researcher of this study took one instance which is evaluating the writing tasks and investigating how the tasks were designed in the textbook. Nunan, (1992) stated that case study is a 'hybrid' in that it generally utilizes a range of methods/ approaches for collecting and analyzing data, rather than being restricted to a single procedure. Therefore, this study utilized mixed approach - both qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative was chosen to discuss the data collected from the writing tasks using words. To support the qualitative approach, quantitative approach was also used. Quantitative was chosen in order to analyze the writing tasks using the evaluating checklists. The writing tasks in the textbook were grouped based on the components of communicative tasks as well as their particular characteristics and expressed in terms of numbers and percentages. Finally, all these findings were evaluated by the checklist.

2.2. Source of Data

The major source of data for this study was the English Students Textbook for Grade-Twelve. The main target of the study was evaluating the writing tasks of this textbook in line with concept of task based language teaching method. All the writing tasks of this textbook were the source of data for this study and considered in the evaluation.

2.4. Instrument of Data Collection

In evaluative research, researchers can use different ways of data gathering tools. The selection of each way of data collection depends on the focus which the researcher aims at. For instance, Nation and Macalister (2010) list sample of the focal areas of material evaluation and systematic course-book evaluation checklist or teacher and learner questionnaire. For examining the quality of curriculum design, systematic course evaluation checklists, analysis of the syllabus and evaluation of the course materials can be used as means of data gathering tools. In short, evaluative research usually uses interviews, self-report scales, observation and checklists. This study employed the document analysis. The detailed description of this data gathering instrument is as follows.

2..4.1. Document Analysis

Document analysis as a major instrument was used to gather data in this study. The document that has been taken for analysis was the new grade 12 English textbook and all the writing tasks were the focus of the evaluation. The whole textbook consists of twelve units and the total number of the writing tasks in this textbook is twenty two. The total number of the writing tasks were found manageable to evaluate and believed that it would maximize the validity of the study. As Kumar (2006) states, the larger the sample, the greater the precision and accuracy of the data it provides. Therefore, all the writing tasks were evaluated.

Besides, to analyze the textbook, checklist was used whose items were taken from the checklist designed by EFL scholars for evaluating an EFL/ESL textbook (Richards, 2001;

Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; Cunningworth, 1995; Harmer, 1998; McGrath, 2001 and Sheldon, 1998). In doing so, some items of these checklists were adopted while others were adapted based on their significance to answer the research questions of the study.

2.5. Method of data analysis

The objective of this study is evaluating all the writing tasks in English Students Textbook for Grade-Twelve in order to find out whether the writing tasks in the textbook are designed according to current theories of communicative tasks. To attain this purpose data were gathered though document analysis. The data gathered through document analysis and questionnaires were analyzed using the following procedures. The data analysis process consisted of both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative data from the task analysis was analyzed using Yes/No- type item analysis. In Yes/No scale, numerical values to responses and the numerical representation (coding) of the items were made in the following two ways: -the favorable items were coded as - Yes. The unfavorable items were coded as No.

The data gathered using checklist was tallied, tabulated, and analyzed using statistical techniques such as percentage was used for describing the different features of the task components of the writing tasks. Moreover, to analyze the textbook, checklist was used whose items were taken from the checklist designed by EFL scholars for evaluating an EFL/ESL textbook (Richards, 2001; Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; Cunningworth, 1995; Harmer, 1998; McGrath, 2001 and Sheldon, 1998). Tabular descriptions which were incorporated in the study were made based on the sections identified in the evaluating checklist. After classifying the categories, each writing task was evaluated against the checklist.

3.   Finding and Discussion

3.1.   General Description of the Textbook

This part dealt with the general description of grade 12 students English textbook. The author of the textbook is Barbara Webb, and the evaluators are Assefa Kessa, Ejeta Negeri, Getahun Gebremedhin and Tesfaye Gebreyes. The publisher of the textbook is Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Ministry of Education. The textbook is prepared centrally and distributed to the whole Ethiopian Preparatory schools.

The task analysis and evaluation have been done on the new Grade 12 English for Ethiopia Students Textbook. This textbook has been used as a teaching material since 2010/11 G.C (2003E.C). This textbook contains 12 units. Each unit contains 9 sections: introduction, listening, language focus, study skills, speaking, reading, word power, writing and assessment. There is a revision part at the end of every three unit. Every unit is divided in to two sections, namely: Part A and B. Each part contains all the nine sections mentioned. Besides, each part has its own objectives and tasks. The textbook consists of 314 pages.

3. 2. The Writing Tasks

The first activity conducted in this study was identifying the writing task for the evaluation. In order to do that, the writing tasks which were suitable for evaluation had to be selected. Then, according to the identification, there are a total of 27 writing tasks (excluding the writing tasks presented in the introduction, and revision sections) in the textbook. Tasks in the revisions sections were not included in order to avoid repetition. Therefore, the main writing tasks, which were selected for evaluation, were 27 in number. These are all the writing tasks found in all the 12 units under the title 'Writing'. The following table shows the writing tasks in each unit.

Table-1. The Writing tasks in grade 12 English textbook

Unit	Tasks

1	- Autobiographical writing - Students write a formal letter to the author of the text in response to his argument.
2	- Write an essay to explain the role and contribution of radio/TV/computers/internet to education - Write a short report on possible future developments in communication technology.
3	- Write Report on an interview - Write an essay
4	- Write a film/book review based on a film/book they have enjoyed, using the listening text review as a model. - A writing spontaneously
5	- Write a paragraph about what makes a good leader - write a 500 report on a topic related to governance/UN
6	- Write a leaflet to persuade customers in another country to buy fair-trade products. - Write a letter to a manufacturer asking them to participate in a fair-trade scheme.
7	- Writing a profile - Write a letter of application to a company of their choice
8	Writing for an essay entitled 'Does Man have more to be proud of than ashamed of?'
9	- write an argumentative essay - write a report

10	• Write a descriptive paragraph • Write a report. • write a formal letter • write some graffiti • Write ten rules for the new society.
11	• Students write summaries of listening text 1 using their notes • Students write a report on the talk show they watched • Write a dialogue. • Find out how to write different kinds of formal letters.
12	• Planning, preparing and producing a class magazine.

The above table shows that the writing activities are taken from various topics which are familiar to the students like writing memories and letter writing. However, majority of the activities are not familiar. The researcher found that the contents and nature of the writing tasks in the textbook are not stated in a clear and understandable way for the language learners. the nature of the writing tasks allow students to work in pairs and groups. This implies that students are given an opportunity to practice writing through the various ways of interaction in the textbook, and it helps to integrate the writing skill with other language skills

Regarding the types of writing tasks in the textbook, the result of the document analysis revealed that there are various writing tasks which range from highly restricted items to highly free ones in the textbook. The three types of writing tasks were provided in the textbook although their distribution varies, from unit to unit, based on their proportion-comparatively. In this case, the types of the writing tasks were discussed below according to their dominance/ recurrence in the textbook.

Table 2: The types of writing tasks in the textbook

Guided		Free		Controlled	
No	%	No	%	No	%
14	51.85	8	29.62	5	18.5

The table indicated that out of the twenty seven writing tasks found in the textbook, 14 of them, about 51.85%, fall under the category of guided writing tasks which made this type to be the most dominant/recurrent one. As scholars claimed, in guided writing the students are given a task to write longer texts in quite restricted or controlled manner by offering samples, models, possibly useful language items, advice, organizational frameworks, etc. Here, students have an opportunity to be creative and they also have some chance for making things worse which can be used as evidence that they are writing. Thus, most of the tasks which were grouped under this category fulfilled at least two of the above features of guided writing.this might help student to develop the writing skill.

The other type of writing tasks that the second dominant one is free writing tasks. In this type of writing tasks, students are supposed to construct their own texts with no restriction with a great chance for creativity and for making things worse so that they have a chance to correct themselves which is sought to be one of the basic characteristics of this approach. According to the document analysis, eight of the writing tasks (about 29.62%) fall under this category. In this case, students write freely following the various stages of process approach of writing without overt guidance, assistance or feedback during the writing process, though a title or task may be set, and 'work' may be marked later which are also the main features of this

approach. Thus, all the five writing tasks in this group fulfilled at least two of the qualities of free writing described above.

Finally, based on results of the document analysis, controlled writing tasks are found to be the least dominant type. That is, five of the whole writing tasks (about 18.5%) found in the textbook are of this kind where students are restricted in the way they respond to the tasks. In other words, in this type of writing tasks, students write single word phrases, sentences, fill gaps of sentences, answer questions that require a word or a phrase etc. in restricted to very tightly focused task which can left students with limited options and opportunities for creativity and for getting things worse . Thus, all the writing tasks included in this group fulfilled at least two of the qualities of controlled writing described above.

Therefore, based on the results found from the document analysis, the writing tasks were disproportionately distributed in the textbook terms in terms of their numbers in the following manner. First, having 14 (about 51.85%) out of the 27 writing tasks of the textbook made guided writing the most dominant/ recurrent type. Next to this, having 8 (about 29.62%) of the textbook categorized free writing to be the second dominant/ recurrent type in the textbook. Finally, controlled writing tasks are the least dominant ones with 5 (18.5%) of the whole writing tasks in the textbook.

The document analysis indicated that there were fewer controlled writing tasks than guided writing and free writing tasks. This may show that in relation to the other types of writing tasks, guided writing tasks are more focused in the textbook while free and controlled ones are less emphasized. Thus, it can be concluded

that the students may lack the skill to write in the three types for the three types were not reasonably emphasized in the textbook.

The other point is that the balance of individual, pair and group work writing tasks which is the focus of evaluation. English grade twelve teacher's guide indicated that the textbook is designed to encourage interaction among students through pair work, group work and whole class activities, and therefore, it consisted of individual, pair, group and whole class activities. Thus, it concluded, many of the activities in the textbook involve students in working with a partner or in a small group.

The document analysis indicated the methods of delivery of the writing tasks vary from unit to unit and from task to task based on the contents and objectives of the tasks which demanded the implementation of various grouping techniques. Therefore, various ways were employed ranging from individual and pair works to small group discussions. The following table shows the three ways of delivering the writing tasks in classroom which were considered when the writing tasks were designed.

Table 3: Methods of performing the writing tasks in the textbook

Individual work		Group work		Pair work	
No	%	No	%	No	%
12	44.4	7	25.92	8	29.62

The table shows that 44.4 % of the writing tasks, in the textbook are designed for individual work which is the most dominant method for carrying out the tasks. Additionally,29.62% of writing tasks required pair work which is the next predominant in the textbook where tasks were carried out in either pair work only or in a combination of pair work with individual work. Finally, 25.92 % of the

writing tasks in the textbook required group work the third dominating way of performing the writing tasks of the textbook where tasks were to be carried out solely in groups or with a combination to individual work.

The above data reveal that individual work, pair work and group work is the manner in which the methods of performing the writing tasks of the textbook are categorized based on the order of their ascendancy. Thus, it was claimed that the writing tasks o f the textbook are not reasonably distributed among individual response, pair work and group work.

This may suggest that pair work and group work writing task are not proportionally emphasized as individual writing tasks in the textbook. That is, it suggested that individual work writing tasks are predominantly employed in the textbook while pair work and group work writing tasks are less emphasized but they are proportionally provided when compared to individual ones.

3.3.The subjects and contents of the writing tasks

The writing tasks of the textbook are taken from various topics which are familiar to the students like letter writing and writing memories and describing pictures. In connection to this, scholars suggest that selecting topics that will motivate learners and engage their attention towards using language can promote their language development as efficiently as possible.   However, some subjects and content of the writing tasks are not familiar like '**A** Film Review', 'writing a report on an aspect of the United Nations' and 'Writing a leaflet on Fair Trade '. This may affect the students' level of comprehension, they may lose their interests to perform the writing tasks in relation to some of these contents. As a result, students may face challenges in becoming proficient in writing. Therefore, textbook writers are expected to design familiar subjects and contents of writing tasks.

3.4.Clarity of instructions in the writing tasks

The document analysis indicated that the instructions of the writing tasks make clear about what learners are expected to do and how to do it. Majority of the instructions are also clear about how the students carry out the writing tasks individually, in pairs or in groups, and they also make clear about the particular genre of writing students can exhibit. Additionally, in most cases the different roles of the teacher and the learners are identified and vividly stated in the instructions of the writing activities.

For instance, in the first writing task of Unit one the writing title 'writing Memories' which focuses on teaching a narrative writing in the form individual and pair works, the instruction makes clear a type of writing students are expected to compose as follows:

1. *On your own, think of some interesting, happy, proud, sad, funny, daring or embarrassing childhood memories.*

They could be about:

- *A family custom that you remember well (for example, how you used to spend a religious holiday; the family duties that you had to do).*

- *An incident that you remember, something that happened to you or someone else in the family (for example, a time when you broke something important or expensive).*

2. *Talk about your memories with your partner.*

3. *Choose five memories and write notes on each one: try to select a range of different type of memories.*

4.   Write a short paragraph about each of your five memories. Each paragraph should be between 70 to 150 words. Your piece of writing can be called Memories.

Begin each paragraph like this:

- *I remember the time when I was about.....years old.....*

- *On another occasion ......*

- *Next, I am going to describe.....*

- *Another memory is of........*

- *Finally, a very happy memory of.....*

5.   When you have finished a first draft of your writing, check your work carefully and make any necessary changes. Then write a final version.

6.   Spend some time reading the memories of other students in the class.

(Englsh for Ethiopia students' textbook grade 12:15)

The above instruction indicated that the roles of both the teacher and of the students are clearly stated in a simple and an understandable manner for both of them alike. Knowing their roles can make students to take responsibilities for their own learning. Writing on new genre type believed to help increase the motivation of students, and hence can enhance their writing skills further. As a result, one can conclude that in the textbook, instructions of the writing tasks give guidance for the students on what to do and how to do it.

In addition to that regarding guiding students how to follow the stages of process writing through the instruction of the writing tasks, the instructions of the existing few process approach writing tasks make clear about how to follow the various stages of process approach. The instructions also give clear advice and framework for the students to write following a process approach.

For example, in the second writing task of Unit Two, the writing title: "ICT on Education" which focuses on a small group writing work for teaching how to write an essay and it goes as follows:

A2.12 Writing: An Essay

Write an essay on the subject of ICT in Education. Your essay can be descriptive, describing how ICT is used in education. You can also include your opinions by making comments on some of the developments you describe. Follow the seven steps outlined below.

The 7 steps of essay writing

Step1: Brainstorm ideas

Make notes of some ideas to include in your essay. In this case you already have the mind map you completed in the previous exercise.

Step2: select your points

- It is generally better to make a few good points (say, two or three) and to support each one in some way by expanding it, explaining it or giving an example. So, your next step should be to decide which of the points in your list you are going to include and how you are going to support each one.

- You may need to research some information in the library or on the internet

Step3: Make a plan

- Use an essay outline (see below)

- Begin by listing the main points and supporting points that you are going to make.

- Think about how you are going to introduce the topic of your essay. You need a sentence or two about the situation today. Try to begin in an interesting way, for example with a question.

- You think about how you are going to conclude your essay. You should restate your main points and possibly make a point about the future of ICT in education.

Step 4: write your essay

Once you have written your plan, you can write your first draft. Don't forget to give your essay a title.

Step 5: check and edit your essay

When you have finished, check your first draft thoroughly for ideas, accuracy,

and

length

Step 6: Ask someone else to read your essay critically.

Make any changes they suggest if you agree with them.

Step 7: Write a neat, final version of your essay

Make sure:

- You leave about a margin of two centimeters on the left of your page if one is not already drawn on your paper

- Your paragraphs are clearly separated by indenting the first line of each paragraph or by leaving a clear line between paragraphs.

Source: (**English for Ethiopia students' textbook grade 12: 40-41)**

The above instruction shows that the students are given a framework and vital piece of advice to follow when constructing their writing texts. It also guides students to plan before writing which is one of the key issues of process approach

to writing. This can gives them a direction to carry out the tasks in a way that is accurate and coherent. Thus, they can practice writing through process approach to enhance their writing skills. Note that in the above instruction, the process of gathering and arranging the information can be considered as important as the text they are composing.

3.5. Goals for the Writing Tasks

The document analysis revealed that every writing task has its own goal which is given at the beginning of every part of each chapter. All writing tasks have purposes which are appropriate to guide learners so that they could use language purposefully while performing the tasks in order to attain the goal which was regarded as one of the basic characteristics of tasks in task- based language learning. This implies the objectives of the writing tasks are clearly set.

Table 4. Objectives /goals for the writing tasks

Units	Objectives
1	Write a five paragraph essay to explain, inform and argue. Elaborate and justify ideas/ arguments/ opinions in essays by giving examples.
2	Write five paragraph essays to explain. Independently follow the seven stages of writing; think, brainstorm, plan, draft, check, rewrite, proofread. Interpret simple statistics and write a report
3	Write a report based on an interview. Write five paragraph essays to explain.
4	Write five paragraph essays to explain, inform and argue.

5	Elaborate and justify ideas/ arguments/ opinions in essays by giving examples.
6	Write a five paragraph essay to explain, inform and argue. Summarize the text using a bullet points Write business correspondence to a standard acceptable in the workplace. Independently follow the seven stages of writing; think, brainstorm, plan, draft, check, rewrite, proofread.
7	Write a letter of application for employment
8	Independently follow the seven stages of writing; think, brainstorm, plan, draft, check, rewrite, proofread. Elaborate and justify ideas/ arguments/ opinions in essays by giving examples. Write five paragraph essays to explain, inform and argue.
9	Write and present a 500 word report on a given topic for a specific audience including suggestions/recommendations. Write a five paragraph essay to argue.
10	Interpret simple statistics and write a report Write formal business correspondence to a standard acceptable in the workplace.
11	Summarize a text in various forms including bullet points, charts, notes and paragraphs. Write a report based on an interview.
12	Independently follow the seven stages of writing; think, brainstorm, plan, draft, check, rewrite, proofread.

	Different MLCs will be practiced by different students.

Source: grade 12 Students' English Textbook

3.6.Grading of the writing tasks

Concerning grading of the textbook writing tasks, the document analysis indicated that the writing tasks are not arranged from what was known and cognitively simple to what seemed unknown and demanding for the students. That is, they were not arranged from simple to complex in terms of the time and effort students needed to perform the tasks. As a result, the writing tasks are not categorized according to their complexity when evaluated in terms of the novelty and the familiarity of contents and subjects of the tasks to learners.

The above idea may suggest that the writing tasks of the textbook are not organized in a way that can nurture the writing skill of students and hence the students' writing skill can be affected to some extent. Therefore, the document analysis revealed that the writing tasks of the textbook were not organized in a logical manner of complexity that can nurture students' writing performance as well as their writing skills.

3.7.The language used in the writing tasks of the textbook

Regarding the above point, the document analysis revealed that most the writing tasks provide students with practical situations to use the language so that they can practice writing through context. That is, writing tasks of the textbook are presented with a natural like background/situation which can give purpose and direction for the learners to perform the tasks. However, the content of the writing tasks are not designed in consideration with students' level. That means, since the students are preparatory school students, it is better to design tasks based on their level. For instance, there is a task about letter writing which content focuses on job

application. Instead of this type of letter, it students may like writing letter about Educational trip application.

The document analysis revealed that the some of the writing tasks of the textbook encourage learners to use written English outside of the school setting which gives them an opportunity to practice the target language in a natural setting where they independent use the written language purposefully. This, in turn, improves their language skills and confidence to write independently beyond the confinements of the classroom. However, some of the tasks do not create this opportunities to the students.

3.8. Providing learners opportunities to express themselves through writing

The document analysis revealed that some of the writing tasks such as writing about their memories, letter writing, describing pictures and writing report can be samples of writing tasks that encourage learners to communicate about themselves through writing. However, some writing tasks like 'film review', ' job application letter' and 'writing the review of television show' seem difficult to express the idea freely in this level due to the difficulty of the tasks.

3.9.Model texts for various writing genres

There are model texts for different writing genres in the textbook. The teacher's guide of grade tewlve English textbook claims that students learn to write for different purposes and to use the appropriate register and style by using the various samples texts provided in the textbook.

Regarding this, the document analysis revealed that there were various writing genres in the textbook so that students could be equipped with the purposes, skills, techniques and styles of writing on a range of genres in the target language. Whenever the textbook deals with or introduces new type of genre, it provides

models with it so that the learners can be familiarized with the structures as well as the functions of a particular type of writing genre. The models might help students to learn about the way of organizing idea in their written text.

Concerning this, the textbook provided the writing models in two ways. That is, first the models were either provided within the writing section or with the other writing tasks of the unit. Or else, second, they were referred for students in other language skill sections of the unit such as in the reading sections, speaking sections or listening sections. That is students were directed to go to other language section of the unit in order to access the model texts through the instructions of the writing tasks. In order to make the analysis clear, the model texts were discussed as their ways of presentation. That is, model texts found in the writing section and models that were referred in other language sections were analyzed and discussed separately.

3.10. Integration of writing with other skills

One of the most important thing in teaching learning process of language is presenting language skills in an integrated way.it is obvious that language skills are interdependent with one another and no specific language skill can stand and function independently. Rather, they are naturally intertwined in a way that can make communication successful. That is to say that while using/ practicing specific language skills, the other language skills also work together indirectly to support the communication process and to help the successfully transfer of a message. Besides, other higher cognitive skills can also assimilate, directly or indirectly, with the language skills in the process of communication. In other words, in the process of achieving a specific objective of a task related to any of the four language skills, all the other language skills as well as higher level cognitive and meta-cognitive

skills like reasoning, analyzing, elaborating were function in unison. Thus, tasks are better carried out and objectives are achieved when these skills are used together. According to the document analysis, most of the writing tasks are integrated with other skills skills, directly or directly, like listening, speaking and reading skills of the language even if the purpose/focus is on writing. Moreover, other skills like discussing, planning, brainstorming, analyzing, idea generating, elaborating, grouping, and so on are also incorporated so that successful accomplishment of the writing tasks can be realized. Based on the results of the study, one can conclude that providing writing tasks in a way to integrate the skill with other language skills as well as other cognitive and meta-cognitive writing skills can enhance the overall language skill development of the students. For instance, the following writing task from grade 12 English textbook is integrated with other skills.

"A10.8 Writing: A formal letter

Work in a small group.

1. *Read this extract from a formal letter and answer the question below."*

4.   Conclusion

The main objective of this study is evaluating the design of the writing tasks in grade 12 English textbook based in line with the principles of task based language teaching method. The instruments that were used to collect data for this research were document analysis and questionnaire. In order to evaluate the findings about the components of the writing tasks, the researcher used an evaluating checklist for communicative tasks. The researcher used the checklist in order to evaluate the components of the writing tasks. As the findings of the study revealed, the writing tasks presented in grade 12 English for Ethiopia textbook are designed fulfilling

some of the relevant criteria of the checklist. Based on the findings identified, the following conclusions are made.

- The finding of the study has shown that the textbook provided a variety of writing tasks which ranges from highly restricted ones to highly free ones and were categorized under three types such as controlled, guided and free writing activities. In spite of this, the textbook hardly encouraged learners to perform writing through process approach to writing which was considered as one of its major limitations.

- It was found out that the textbook provided the writing tasks with clear and precise goals for the learners. It also indicated that the writing tasks were provided with sufficient and clear instructions in the textbook.

- Most of the writing activities are appropriate to the communicative goals of the tasks. All the activities presented in the writing tasks are designed in accordance with the designed task

- The result of this study indicated that some of the writing tasks were familiar having real language use situations in a way that encourage students to practice using the target language purposefully. It was also found out that the language used in the writing activities were practical and useful for everyday use to enable students to perform their communicative tasks in real-life situations through writing in the target language. However, some of the writing tasks are not familiar and contextualized for students.

- The roles of the learners and teachers in the writing tasks are appropriate.

- One of the weaknesses of the writing tasks of the textbook was the arrangement of the writing tasks. Most of the writing activities were focusing on essay writing. Three of the activities required paragraph writing. Few of the writing activities addressed sentence writing. This implies the writing tasks are not designed based on the

difficulty level, and some of the activities are not appropriate for the level of the students.

- Concerning the varieties of the writing tasks the findings of this study has shown that there were varieties of writing topics. Some of the contents of writing tasks in the textbook were challenging for the students to deal with though some of the contents are still interesting and motivating for students.

- The roles of the students and teachers in the writing tasks are clearly stated both in the textbook and in the syllabus.

- Finally, it also revealed that model texts for different writing genres were provided in the textbook in order to allow learners to develop the skills to compose on a variety of writing genres.

5. Recommendations

To improve the problems seen in the writing tasks of grade 12 English textbook for Ethiopia, it is good to give some possible recommendations. Thus, based on the findings and the conclusions, the following recommendations are forwarded.

- Students are expected to use the language in their real life. To attain this curriculum designers and textbook writers should consider the method which could be used for the designed task. In order to help students to be proficient in their writing skills, teachers should motivate and support their students to practice writing skills through task-based activities.

- Varieties of writing tasks might grasp students' interest to practice the writing activities, therefore, textbook writers' should consider to provid varieties of writing tasks when they design writing tasks or develop textbooks.

- The goals of each writing task should be clearly stated both in the textbook and in the syllabus to enhance students writing skill.

- The writing tasks should be familiar to promote real language use situations in a way that encourage students to practice using the target language purposefully.

- The writing activities should be designed in order to allow learners to do the writing activities individually, in pair and in group. It is advisable for curriculum designer and textbook writers to provide writing tasks which are appropriate for individual work, pair work and group work proportionally to ensure their consistency in the textbook according to the learners' language learning styles so that students can practice writing through various ways.

- Teachers and students should play their parts during the writing activities. So, the roles of the students and teachers in the writing tasks should be clearly stated both in the textbook and in the syllabus.

- Finally, it is recommended that teachers should adopt or adapt writing tasks in a way that can allow students to review the work of their peers so that they can learn giving appropriate feedbacks. Thus, their confidence to writing and their writing skills could be improved while they can learn writing through task-based learning approach.

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